

YOUTH SERVICES POLICY

Title: Youth Sentence Computation Next Annual Review Date: 09/08/2010	Type: B. Classification, Sentencing and Service Functions Sub Type: 4. Sentencing Number: B.4.1
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References: ACA Standards 2-CO-1E-05 (Administration of Correctional Agencies); 4-JCF-3A-21 and 4-JCF-3A-23 (Performance-Based Standards for Juvenile Correctional Facilities); 2-7195 (Probation and Aftercare Services); La. Children's Code Title I, Arts. 114, 804 (3), 897, 897.1, 898, 898 A, 898 C.1, 899, 900, 900 A; Title VII; La. Civil Code Art. 29; La. CCrP Arts. 833, 883, 900 (5), 901 (C) (1), 933.	
Approved By: Mary L. Livers, Deputy Secretary	Date of Approval: 09/08/2009

I. AUTHORITY:

Deputy Secretary of Youth Services as contained in La. R.S. 36:405. Deviation from this policy must be approved by the Deputy Secretary.

II. PURPOSE:

To establish the Deputy Secretary's policy that judges and youth in YS custody shall be provided a prompt, accurate sentence computation showing the youths' scheduled discharge date.

III. APPLICABILITY:

Deputy Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Deputy Assistant Secretaries, Facility Directors, all employees involved in the preparation of youth time computation, and all employees whose duties relate to programming which can be affected by a youth's scheduled discharge date.

IV. DEFINITIONS:

Adjudication - after the presentation of evidence, or the entering of a plea, the entering of a judgment by the court which indicates whether the facts as alleged in the petition forming the basis of the action have been proven, i.e. whether the family is in need of services or the child committed the delinquent act.

Beginning Date - The day of disposition for the initial time computation and for additional dispositions that are to run concurrent. For additional commitments that run consecutive, the beginning date is the discharge date of the judgment to which the additional commitment is to run consecutive.

Concurrent Commitments - Sentences that run simultaneously, i.e., at the same time. They do not have to start or end at the same time but are running together at some point.

Consecutive Commitments - Sentences that begin to run at the conclusion of the disposition specified in the order or, if none specified, to any disposition the youth is presently serving.

Date of Commitment - The date the judgment is rendered in court regardless of the date it is signed. The term “commitment” applies to youth adjudicated Families in Need of Services (F.I.N.S.) or Delinquent and placed in the custody of YS.

Detention Credit - Credit given toward the term of the commitment for the time spent in secure detention, prior to the imposition of disposition (La. Children's Code Arts. 898 A and 900 A). This may also be referred to as jail credit and credit for time served. Detention credit covers time spent in detention prior to being sentenced only. After the disposition is rendered, the sentence has begun to run and time served is counted as part of the sentence. (See exception described in Section VI.F.1.)

Discharge - The termination either by a court order or expiration of a court order of YS' legal responsibility for a youth, i.e. the youth will no longer be in custody or under supervision.

Discharge Date - The day following the last inclusive date of supervision or custody of a youth as ordered by a court and reflected in the original commitment/disposition document, or a subsequent modification, signed minute entry or court order. If all factors remain constant a youth's discharge date will not change; events such as escapes, new charges or time in jail on new charges may affect the date.

Disposition (also known as Judgment of Disposition) – the written order of the court, following adjudication, which assigns custody/supervision and the terms thereof.

Escape - Absconding from the grounds of a secure facility or from the custody of an employee off the grounds of a secure facility for any length of time; or failure to return from temporary furlough from a secure facility unless otherwise determined by the Director.

Felony - A criminal offense that may be punished by death or imprisonment at hard labor.

Family In Need of Services (F.I.N.S.) - An adjudication for status offenses.

Inclusive Date - The last day that must be served in custody.

Juvenile Electronic Tracking System (JETS) - The centralized database used to track all youth under OJJ supervision.

Louisiana Code of Criminal Procedure - In delinquency matters if there are no procedures provided in the delinquency title (Title VII) of the Children's Code to govern a particular issue, procedures in this code are controlling. Cited as La.C.Cr.P.

Misdemeanor - A criminal offense other than a felony, and includes the violation of an ordinance providing a penal sanction.

Reassignment - The authorized move of a custody youth from one facility or program to another. Also, custody youth may be reassigned into the community under supervision while still in the legal custody of YS.

Release - The legal process by which a court order removed a youth from YS' custody and allows his return to the community under supervision.

Runaway - A youth assigned to a non-secure program who leaves the program without permission or fails to return from a home pass. A F.I.N.S. youth may be a runaway from any assigned location.

Secure Facility - A facility that is used exclusively for youth who have been adjudicated delinquent and placed in the custody of YS; it is characterized by a perimeter fence and exclusive staff and physical facility control over the rights of the residents to enter or leave the premises on a twenty-four hour basis through a controlled entrance.

For the purposes of this policy, the following facilities are considered secure facilities:

Bridge City Center for Youth
Jetson Center for Youth
Swanson Center for Youth

Time Intervals -

Month - Actual days in calendar month. Example: A youth is adjudicated, proceeds to disposition on July 31st, and receives a sentence of one month. The last inclusive date of confinement would be August 30th with a discharge date of August 31st.

Year - Actual calendar year. Example: A youth is adjudicated, proceeds to disposition on February 1st, and receives a sentence of one year. The last inclusive date of confinement would be January 31st of the next calendar year with a discharge date of February 1st.

V. POLICY:

It is the policy of the Deputy Secretary that an accurate record of sentence-related information shall be established for each youth committed to the custody of YS. This information shall be maintained in the case record. The date of discharge or expiration of the commitment shall be based on the written documentation received from the court. Such documentation includes, but is not limited to, orders, judgments, signed court minutes and extracts.

The disposition date and the discharge date shall be entered into the Juvenile Electronic Tracking System (JETS). A hard copy of the time computation document created electronically in JETS shall be part of the actual case record.

VI. PROCEDURES:

A. Examination of Commitment Documents

Immediately following receipt, the court documents shall be thoroughly examined for clarity to ensure compliance with appropriate statutes and YS Policies. If clarification is needed, the appropriate Probation and Parole Officer - Juvenile from the regional office or the person(s) designated by the Facility Director of the applicable secure facility, will be responsible for contacting the court to obtain additional information. Any questions regarding the legality of commitment shall be directed to Legal Services at YS Central Office.

B. Consideration of Variables

In computing time, at a minimum, the following variables shall be considered:

1. Date youth was committed to YS;
2. Age when offense was committed;
3. Date of 18th and 21st birthdays;
4. Type of offense (felony/misdemeanor, La. Children's Code Art. 897.1 offense);
5. Commitment type:
 - a. Delinquent; or
 - b. F.I.N.S.;
6. Type of sentence:
 - a. concurrent;
 - b. consecutive; and/or
 - c. special conditions specified by court;

7. Length of sentence;

8. Detention credit.

C. Verification of Time Computation

Each youth's time computation shall be computed by one staff member and verified for accuracy by a second staff member. Both employees shall sign or initial the computation document indicating agreement on the discharge date.

D. Time Computation System/Forms

JETS shall be used for calculating all discharge dates of youth in YS custody. [See Attachment B.4.1 (a) for instructions concerning electronic Time Computation in JETS.]

Initial/Concurrent Commitment - Initial/Concurrent computation is to be completed by facility or regional office staff, as appropriate, using the Initial/Concurrent Commitments-Time Computation document [Attachment B.4.1 (b)]. Each disposition requires completion of a separate Time Computation document, resulting in a Scheduled Closure Date for the disposition entered into JETS.

Discharge Date Revisions for Escapes/Runaways - Revisions to discharge dates are to be completed by regional office staff or by staff at the facility to which a youth is assigned, as applicable, using the Escape/Runaway Time Recomputation document [Attachment B.4.1 (c)]. Revisions to discharge dates require immediate entry into JETS.

Consecutive Commitments - Time computation for consecutive commitments are completed by appropriate staff on the Consecutive Commitments - Time Computation document [Attachment B.4.1 (d)]. JETS must be updated immediately so that the master record will reflect the new discharge date.

E. Distribution of Time Computation

For secure facilities, the Initial Time Computation spreadsheet is filed in the youth's case record in Clip 1 of the record, under the face sheet. The youth, and the committing court shall receive a copy of the Initial Time Computation document and thereafter as revisions are made.

For non-secure programs, the Initial Time Computation document is filed in the youth's case record in Section 1 under the JETS master form. The youth and the committing court shall receive a copy of the Initial Time Computation document then and thereafter as revisions are made.

F. Factors in Calculating Time

1. Detention Credit - It is important to know the exact number of days spent in detention prior to disposition. Any portion of a day served in detention is counted as a whole day.

Detention credit is given, even if the court order does not explicitly state that the youth is to receive credit for time served in detention (La. Children's Code Arts. 898 A and 900 A), with the exception noted below. Credit must be given for time served in detention regardless of the manner in which the court has expressed the sentence, unless the court has specifically denied detention credits in the commitment order. The sentence may be expressed in years, months, days or birthdays (until the 18th or other birthday), or a specific date (10/1/07).

If the full term date is expressed as a birthday or specific discharge date, correspondence will be sent, by the unit that calculated the discharge date, to the committing court advising the court of YS' interpretation of the law. The time computation shall be sent with the correspondence [Attachment B.4.1 (e)]. After receiving said correspondence, if the committing court communicates to the agency its intention to deny the detention credit the court should be advised that a minute entry or order reflecting denial of detention credit or restating the sentence will be required to effect a change in the time computation.

If the court denies detention credit, the court's instructions shall be followed. Such instructions, along with the time period or dates disallowed, shall be noted on the Initial Time Computation documents in the comments section. Documentation shall be included to indicate that the youth was advised that the court's instructions are inconsistent with YS' interpretation of the law governing detention credit on time computation.

Youth adjudicated for the commission of an offense enumerated in La. Children's Code Art. 897.1 (A), with the exception of armed robbery remain in a secure care facility until their 21st birthday; therefore detention credit is not given. Commitments for commission of armed robbery are eligible for detention credit.

2. Movement between OJJ Programs - Once a youth is committed to YS' custody, time begins to run on the commitment, regardless of the placement. For instance, if a youth is assigned to a residential program, remains there for two months, then is reassigned to a secure facility, the discharge date will remain the same (if there are no breaks in time, such as for escape or runaway).

3. Age (see La. Children's Code Arts. 804 (3), 897.1, 898 C (1), 899 D and 900:
 - a. If the youth is F.I.N.S., a judgment of disposition shall not remain in force after he reaches his 18th birthday.
 - b. A juvenile must be at least 10 years of age in order to be adjudicated a delinquent.
 - c. The disposition of a juvenile who is less than thirteen years of age at the time of commitment to the custody of the Department, based on a felony-grade adjudication, terminates upon reaching age eighteen.
 - d. A youth 14 years of age or older at the time he commits an offense enumerated in Ch.C. Art. 897.1 (except for armed robbery) at age 14 or older must be committed until their twenty-first birthday. At age 13 or younger, Ch.C. 897.1 does not apply.
 - e. A juvenile must be thirteen years or older at the time of commission of a misdemeanor in order to be placed into the custody of the department.
4. Concurrent and Consecutive Sentences - Consecutive sentences may only be computed on dispositions of the same type - that is, F.I.N.S. or Delinquent (unless otherwise ordered by the Court). For example, if there are three dispositions on the same youth, two for delinquent and one F.I.N.S., the two delinquent dispositions may be run consecutive to one another but not the F.I.N.S. disposition. The F.I.N.S. disposition must be computed as if the delinquent dispositions do not exist.
 - a. Concurrent - When a disposition is received on a youth currently serving a commitment and the court orders the second judgment to run concurrently with the first, the beginning date shall be the date as specifically ordered by the court. If the court is silent concerning the beginning date, then the day that the judgment is rendered is the beginning date of the concurrent sentence.
 - b. Consecutive - When the court orders a second or additional judgment to run consecutive with the first judgment, the second judgment begins after the first sentence is finished. The discharge date from the first judgment becomes the beginning date for the second judgment. This is also true if the second order is from a different court. The time begins to run on the second disposition after the first sentence is finished.

The La. Children's Code does not address the issue of concurrent and consecutive sentencing. The La. C.Cr.P. Art. 883, however, states, "If the defendant is convicted of two or more offenses based on the same act or transaction, or constituting parts of a common scheme or plan, the terms of imprisonment shall be served concurrently unless the court expressly directs that some or all be served consecutively. Other sentences of imprisonment shall be served consecutively unless the court expressly directs that some or all of them be served concurrently. In the case of the concurrent sentence, the judge shall specify, and the court minutes shall reflect, the date from which the sentences are to run concurrently."

5. Probation Violations - Time spent in detention does not lessen the time to be spent on probation. If a youth spends 30 days in detention, is adjudicated and sentenced to serve six months, suspended, and then is put on probation for two years, his probation expires on "Date of Commitment plus two years."

Any time within the probationary period, the probation may be revoked and the suspended sentence imposed. If this occurs, then the detention credit would apply toward his actual sentence of confinement.

Time spent on probation serves only to satisfy probation. It cannot be credited towards a later-imposed sentence of confinement, unless the judge so orders. La. C.Cr.P. Art. 900 (5) gives the judge the option to give credit for time served on probation in cases where the probation is being revoked for violation of probation conditions (technical violation). If the probation is revoked for commission of another offense, La. C.Cr.P. Art. 901C (1) prohibits granting credit for time served while on probation to apply toward the sentence.

6. Escape - An escape or runaway interrupts the time served. Any part of a day on escape or runaway will be considered as a whole date, (i.e., if a youth is gone from noon on one day until the evening of the following day, he will have two days escape time to be computed).

If a youth who escapes or runs away has a discharge date specified by the court, such as the 18th birthday, it will be necessary to contact the court prior to recalculating a new discharge date to determine if the court will allow the discharge date to be extended to add the time while on escape. If the specified date of discharge is age 21, this point is moot.

7. New Offense/Jail Time - If a youth's time is interrupted because he is sentenced to a period of confinement in jail or parish prison based on commission of another offense, the time spent in jail or parish prison is not in satisfaction of his initial juvenile commitment, and is not to be given as credit. However, the juvenile judge is to be informed of this occurrence. Should the judge order that credit be given, this order is binding.
8. Juvenile Commitment for Misdemeanor-Grade Offense/Subsequent Adult Felony Conviction - If a youth with a disposition based on a misdemeanor grade adjudication subsequently commits a felony and is convicted or pleads guilty to a felony as an adult, the youth's juvenile adjudication and disposition terminate.
9. Juvenile Commitment for Felony Grade Offense/Subsequent Adult Felony Conviction - If a youth with a disposition based on a felony grade adjudication subsequently commits and is convicted or pleads guilty to a felony as an adult, YS may keep the youth in custody in accordance with the terms of the juvenile disposition, or may transfer the youth to serve the adult felony sentence. YS retains the authority to transfer the youth to the adult system until the juvenile commitment expires. If not transferred prior to the expiration of the juvenile sentence, the youth will be transferred at the completion of the juvenile sentence.
10. Contempt time only satisfies the contempt, not an on-going custody disposition.

Previous Regulation/Policy Number: B-04-002 / B.4.1

Previous Effective Date: 11/15/2001



Attachments/References: B.4.1 (a) Time Computation in Lotus Notes 9-09.doc



B.4.1 (b) Initial Time Computation 9-09.doc



B.4.1 (c) Escape - Runaway Time Recomputation 9-09.doc



B.4.1 (d) Consecutive Commitments - Time Computation 9-09.doc



B.4.1 (e) Letter to Court 9-09.doc